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Promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment

Date: September 17, 2007

To: Persons who were in attendance at the July 12, 2007, public informational meeting for the proposed Santee Cooper Pee Dee power plant project; those that have submitted written comments concerning this proposed project; and/or those that have requested to receive updates on this proposed project.

From: Rhonda B. Thompson, P.E., Director
Engineering Services Division
Bureau of Air Quality

Re: Proposed Santee Cooper Pee Dee Power Plant Air Permit Update

Thank you for your interest in the proposed Santee Cooper Pee Dee power plant project. We appreciate your interest and early involvement in our air permitting process.

Many of you have requested that SC DHEC not issue the draft Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) air permit until the U.S. Corps of Engineers issues its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this proposed project. While the EIS is required for the wetlands permit, it is not required for the issuance of the PSD permit.

The PSD permitting process thoroughly addresses all air quality impacts of air pollutants regulated by the PSD program. The PSD permitting process also ensures that all state and federal regulatory air quality requirements will be met. Other air pollutants not regulated by the PSD program, such as greenhouse gases and emissions from mobile sources, are not included in the draft PSD permit.

In addition, our regulations specify that a final PSD determination should be made within a specified timeframe, and we are not allowed to hold a permit application indefinitely when a facility has submitted all required information to meet the PSD regulations. Therefore, after careful review of all comments submitted to date, as well as our current regulations, we have decided to proceed with issuance of the draft PSD air permit. We estimate that the draft PSD permit and preliminary determination will be placed on public notice by early October 2007, with a public hearing to follow in November 2007. We welcome your comments on the draft permit and preliminary determination once they are made available to the public. If you have already submitted comments, we will continue to evaluate and consider those comments during the official public comment period.

Many of you have also expressed interest in further discussion on the need for the proposed Pee Dee plant along with other possible alternatives to the plant such as energy conservation. The public scoping meetings sponsored by the U.S. Corps of Engineers for the EIS will give the public an opportunity to discuss energy needs and alternatives to the proposed plant. Although an evaluation of the need for the plant and possible alternatives are not part of the PSD permitting process, all requirements resulting from the EIS must be addressed by Santee Cooper.

SC DHEC is fully committed to participating in interagency meetings and the public scoping meetings. We will also review and provide feedback on the draft and final EIS documents. The public scoping meetings are planned for September 25, 2007, in Conway, SC and on September 27, 2007, in Florence, SC. **Please visit <http://www.peedeepowereis.com>** for more information about the public scoping meetings.

Thank you again for your comments and interest in this proposed project. Please feel free to forward this information to others you know who may be interested. Should you have any questions or need additional information please visit our website at <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/SanteeCooper.aspx> or contact us at SCPeeDeePlantComments@dhec.sc.gov.